Chester June 25th 1816 –

Yesterday. the Fraternity of Free Masons celebrated the Festival of St. John in this town – The day was very hot. and having a large share in the exercises of the day. I found myself, almost exhausted by evening – On returning home. I forgot the exercises of the day. in thinking of Louisa – I threw myself on the bed, and in the course of an hour the sweet conversation. I then (in imagination) had with you, almost restored me – I arose & went into my office, where I found a medicine that cured me. your Letter of the 2d & 7th of June was there, I read it and was well – I loose no time in answering it – You say in my last I mentioned being out of health – I am better – yes I am well. and I hope before this reaches you the health of your sister will be restored –

I imagine that my last letter was written soon after. I had been exercising with the hoe – I have for the sake of exercise. paid a little atten-

-tion to Gardening. But as you predicted the frost has destroyed it — The season is very backward, and the prospect, for the Farmer, is rather Gloomy, in this part of the country —

You ask, with some degree of anxiety, not to be disappointed, in my coming to Canton in the fall — On this subject you need not doubt — Nothing but the interposition of Providence, shall hinder my being in Canton the last of September next — I have thought of the following plan — (if it meets with your approbation — If not, wish you to amend, or alter it to your liking —) that is, for me to come to Canton in September, and bring you to Vermont — tarry here untill winter — then to make a visit at your Fathers — This arrangement will be pleasing to our friends here, for they are very anxious to see you —

The young people in this Town have lately learned your name, and are frequently soliciting

me to bring you to Chester - A Mr. Wolcott
from Shoreham the Preceptor of our Academy,
(who graduated last Commencement at Middlebury)
is often asking me when you are coming -
And Miss Fanny Goodhue, and Anna Hubbard
two young ladies that live about a rod from
my Office, (both of whom I expect will be married
in the fall), are daily questioning me about you.
And have frequently asked me to send their
Love, and good wishes to you - And many
others, fearing, I suppose, that I shall not tell
the whole; are often asking my little cousin
Sylvanus Batley (who attends our Academy
this Quarter) concerning you - In short you
are a person, about whom there has, lately
been a great deal said, in this village -
And if on your arrival here, you should
be gazed at considerable, you must be astonished.

On monday next I start for Massachusetts. shall be gone a fortnight: and before I return shall make a short visit with my friends there, some of whom I have not seen for twenty years — This Journey will be the last I shall make, untill September — I shall make this Journey in a one horse Waggon. How I shall Journey in Septr. will be for you to determine — If you do not conclude, then to come *home* with me, I shall ride on a horse — But if you conclude to return with me I come in such manner as you shall direct — Cephas —

P.S. In the beginning of this, I mentioned that the Free-Masons celebrated the 24th of June in this Town — At the same time they *dedicated* their new Hall — Perhaps a few extracts from an oration delivered on the occasion may not be uninteresting — I do not send you the extracts on account of their novelty or elegance, but because they contain some of the principals of Masonry -

" By Free-Masonry we are taught to view Man as he is. not as a recluse, or a hermit; but as a being formed for action and capable of improvement - Owing certain duties to his *Creator*, himself and his fellows - The Brethren are taught to view the human race as one great family - possessing the same propensities. and liable to the same calamities - As Masons they are citizens of the World - Every Brother with unsuspecting confidence. reposes upon the *Good* man and *true*, wherever he may be found - No matter in what climate he may have been born; or to what Government or country he may belong - Whoever possesses the valuable Gem untarnished. to him confidence is given -

The precepts of Free-Masonry also enjoin the cultivation of the arts and sciences - They ad-

=monish every Brother, to practice the moral Virtues- promote the social affections- and unceasingly endeavour to extend the circle of human happiness- Under the influence of these precepts, those branches of Science, that expand, and enoble the mind are cultivated- The harsher passions are softened- and the sentiments of Benevolence and Charity are awakened in the human breast-

Every Mason whose conduct is regulated by the pure principles of his profession, must have a mind calm and peaceful- His plans are regulated by Wisdom- His actions squared by Virtue- His words & conversation are tested by the Plumbline of truth- His desires are circumscribed by prudence- And the foibles & errours of his Brethren are covered with the mantle of Charity- He spreads the cement of Brotherly Love & affection, with Benevolence & candour- His hope is founded on the promises, revealed in the Book of Holy scripture - And ^he^ looks by the eye of Faith, through the boundless realms of eternity, to that Temple, not made with hands, where the supreme Architect of the Universe presides" -

N.B. from the foregoing, you will see that I belong to the society of Masons I do not know that you was a friend of it before -

in the host of holy ancestors - and [illegible] a
the eye of Faith, through the [illegible]
Sabbath of Eternity, is that Temple, not
made with hands, where the Supreme
Architect of the Universe

[illegible] virtue -
prompts [illegible]
[illegible] of human happiness
Unites the influence of these precepts - then branches
to become [illegible] expand and enable the mind [illegible]
[illegible] his harsher passions are softened - and
the [illegible] of benevolence and charity are
awakened in the human breast.
Every Mason whose conduct is regulated by
[illegible]
is [illegible] and beautiful - his plans are
regulated by Wisdom - his actions by
Virtue - his words [illegible] conversation are tested by
the Compasses of Truth - his desires are circum-
scribed by prudence - and the [illegible] failings of
his Brethren are covered with the mantle of
Charity - he spreads the cement of Brotherly
love & affection, with Benevolence & candour -
his hope is founded on the promises revealed

Free C. L. Rockwood
Post Master

Miss Lovisa Foote
Canton
N. York